

Aura of Shirdi Sai



SaiAura
I AM EVERYWHERE —

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First Word

There is a parallel in the life of Vatsali, the daughter of Kaka Saheb Dixit and Franz Kafka, the author of the book 'The Metamorphosis and the Trial', who never married and had no children. Kafka walked through a local park in Stieglitz in Berlin one day in the Fall of 1923 and met a girl who was crying inconsolably because she had lost her favorite doll. She and Kafka searched for the doll unsuccessfully. Kafka told her to meet him there the next day and they would come back to look for her once again.



Kaka Dixit was assured by Sai Baba that he would always be close behind them and protect them throughout. Vatsali had this implicit faith and she felt that Sai Baba was always with her. Vatsali also had lost her doll and was looking forward to Baba's help in retrieving it.

Coming back to Vatsali, the next day, when they had not yet found the doll, Sai Baba incognito gave the girl a letter 'written' by the doll saying "please don't cry. I took a trip to see the world. I will write to you about my adventures." The story continued for weeks. Since the little girl could not read, Sai Baba incognito read the letters of the doll in Marathi during their meetings. Sai Baba wrote a daily letter telling of new adventures, which evolved rapidly, as per the special rhythms of the life of dolls.

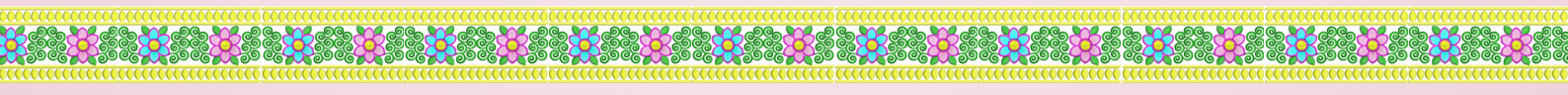
After a few days, the child had forgotten the loss of her real toy and had no thought for anything, but the fiction offered in exchange. The carefully written story with adventures and conversations was a real labor for Sai Baba, as the child must not at all cost be cheated, and the lie must be transformed into the truth of reality through the truth of fiction. Finally, Sai Baba brought back the doll that had returned to Bombay. He bought one. "It doesn't look like my doll at all," said the girl. Sai Baba handed her another letter in which the doll wrote: "My travels have changed me."

The little girl hugged the new doll happily and brought her home. After writing a letter every day for three weeks, Sai Baba eventually ended the episode by informing the little girl, in the persona of the doll, that she was to be married and begin a new life with her husband: "You yourself will understand, we must give up seeing each other." Many years later the girl, now a woman, found a letter inside the doll. In the tiny letter signed by Kaka Dixit, it was written: "Everything you love will probably be lost, but in the end, love will return in another way."

The story of Vatsali parallel to Kafka is a remarkable gesture of kindness from one of the world's most bewildering and iconic writers. There are two wise lessons in this story: that grief and loss are ubiquitous even for a young child; that the way toward healing is to look for how love comes back in another form. The story was first recounted by Vatsali to Sri Narasimha Swamiji and Dasganu Maharaj, in the early 1950s.

The legend of Kafka and the doll, as well as Vatsali and Sai Baba, have captivated imaginations for decades as it reveals the playful and compassionate side of Parabrahman Sai Baba known for his brooding tales. Whether or not the story of Kafka and the doll is factually accurate, Vatsali's narration none the less continues to provide comfort and encouragement to millions in the face of grief and loss. The story of Sai Baba's and Kafka's kindness and compassion provide, for the wider global audience, the same service that the letters themselves do for the little girl in the park i.e., consolation through storytelling.

We greet the readers of SAI AURA with a message behind this story is that embracing change willy-nilly, because it is inevitable for growth because together we can shift pain into wonder and love; but it is up to us to consciously and intentionally create the connection.



A Thought



The very epitome of humility, Sai with a 'Jholi on His left shoulder and a begging bowl (Tumrel) in His right hand, standing at the door of Baija Bai, begging in voice celestial, "Mai! Put a piece of bhakri in my Jholi and a little buttermilk or dal in my tumrel, if available".

Shouldn't we conjure a picture of this Great Messiah of humanity, on the canvas of our mind and assess for ourselves, how far have we, his devotees, been able to adopt the humility of this Great Saint in our Lives?

Let us peep within us and seek an answer.

My Mother

My mother gave me the body
Creating it out of her own
She taught me to walk
And infused the values of life in me
Making me stand on my own feet
Maa left for the heavenly abode
On the 6th day of January 2010
Entrusting me to the care of Sai Maa
Who took over complete charge of my life henceforth,
The pain of losing the physical mother subsided.

Sai Maa lifted me into her arms,
Kissed me, hugged me, and gave me a new confidence
To tread on the forthcoming path of search into the self.

The amount of love it bestowed on me
Can words ever describe?
My life was filled with new hopes and new joys
It attained a new meaning
Every single moment,
The ecstasy of the soul enveloped my being
Generating selfless, pure, unadulterated love.

And slowly but steadily, Sai Maa's grace descended on me
Bestowing on me the priceless treasure of self-surrender
My whole being started to emit a fragrance
Which turned many a heart towards my Sai Maa.

Time kept on moving
Slowly and slowly
The chant of Sai' Sai' touched the skies
And now Lo! The whole world
Is filled with the echoes of my Sai Maa's name



— by **Sai Raghu**

A Dip into Vishnu Sahasranama-24: Sahasranama Bestows The Freedom To Desire Limitlessly

— by **Seetha Priya**



Sri Radhakrishna Swamiji has stated – “A desireless person is a veritable Emperor”. He supplemented it by saying – ‘Desiring to be desireless’. Many have grossly misinterpreted Sri Radhakrishna Swamiji’s emphasis on ‘desirelessness’. He would have known only too well that without desire there can be no existence. But what he was pointing to was the importance of operating out of a state of inner fulfillment rather than inner hankering. Once this is accomplished, your life becomes an expression of bliss, not a pursuit of it. Your desire does not evaporate; instead, it becomes conscious. Your desire is no longer the unconscious fuel for your personal identity. It is the conscious tool by which you function. You can now desire the well-being of the entire planet.

The 24th shloka of Vishnu Sahasranama is –

**Agrani Gramani Shreeman Nyayo Neta
Sameerana**

**Sahasramurdha Viswatma Sahasrakshah
Sahasrapat**

Lord Vishnu is the top leader (Agrani) and Director (Gramani) of a group and is all auspiciousness (Shreeman), who is just (Nyaya),

Regulator (Neta) of the breath (Sameerana). This many-headed (Sahasramurdha) Universal Soul (Viswatma) is many-eyed (Sahasraksha) with many feet (Sahasrapat).

Hari Sitaram Dixit, also known as Kaka Dixit was an eminent Lawyer in Mumbai. Once he earned a trunk-load of silver coins for defending a case in litigation. Kaka Dixit’s wife was happy that her husband came home with a trunk full of one rupee silver coins! But Dixit wanted to gift away the entire money to Sai Baba!

On the same night, Kaka Dixit left for Shirdi with the trunk full of one rupee coins. Kaka Dixit reached Shirdi and offered the entire money to Sai Baba. Baba distributed it to all those present in the mosque – poor villagers, needy devotees, fakirs, and others dependent on his Dakshina money.

As the treasure in the trunk was coming to its end, a poor farmer came with his two sheep and a half-dead goat. He sought thirty-two rupees for the two sheep and nothing for the goat. Baba



paid him fifty-two rupees adding twenty for the goat. The farmer was pleased and started to go. Baba made him sit in the mosque. He obtained two seers of gram and fed the sheep. The goat did not even touch as it had no strength to masticate the grams.

Baba returned the sheep and gave ten seers of grams as a bonus. He asked the farmer to feed them properly and whenever his money position did not permit proper feeding of the sheep, he could approach Baba. The farmer left the place. Madhava Rao grumbled – “Baba what kind of bargain is this? You paid sixteen rupees for a sheep worth not even three! You returned the sheep too and retained this dying goat! We have lost money and sheep!” Baba explained – “Shama, bargaining is only in the materialistic world. How would you know the divine practicality of such a bargain? Do you know they were brothers in the past birth? They loved each other! They would come to me always

together – the elder one was a lazy chap! He did nothing to earn. The younger one was active and earned a lot. This made the elder brother envy his prosperity. Both started fighting over the money. And one day that ended in their killing each other with axes. The result was that they are born again – but as two sheep! That is why I repeatedly tell – ‘Do not have this infatuation for money! It makes you suffer life after life! Seeing them today I took pity on them and so after feeding sent them away! You regretted that I lost money and sheep! But what is this money, Shama? Man does not love man. He loves his money. Just now I gave money to so many! Tell me how many of them factually love me?’”

Many in the crowd said – “Baba, we love you, we love you. Do test us.” Kaka Dixit was quiet. He was wondering at the lesson of ‘freedom to Desire limitlessly’ that Baba offered through such an anecdote!

***Birth is the result of the karma done before the death .
If you are asked, what happens to man after death,
you can point to yourself and can declare, that ...***

**“THIS IS WHAT HAPPENS”
THEY ARE BORN AGAIN.**



**For, the future is in your hands.
AND TOMORROW CAN BE SHAPED ONLY BY TODAY.
Though today has already been shaped by yesterday.**

Kaka Dixit Diary

Guards of Dwarkamayi

Devotees of Sai Baba called Dwarakamayi -- the gates of moksha, liberation, and sakshatkar, Self-realization. Ganesh Srikrishna Khaparde of Amaravati used to make fun of the three of us -- Dhabolkar, Nana Chandorkar, and myself as three guards posted at Dwarakamayi to ask you for your credentials. Dasganu explained that we are — shanti, santosh, and vichar, that is peace, mental equilibrium; joy, contentment; and inquiry, discrimination. Even if you become friends with only one of the guards, the others will facilitate your entry.

First in the series is peace. If you make peace yours, trupti, contentment is yours, and contentment is the highest source of joy and the most valuable possession. It is as much as an empire granted by Sai Maharaj.

Without contentment, kama, desire, and lobha, greed, attain dangerous proportions and will overwhelm the power of discrimination itself. Desire easily becomes greed, and greed degenerates into miserliness and lust, which make one flit from object to object in the mad pursuit of evanescent sensual joy. How can people with such qualities concentrate, how can they engage in meditation and surrender to Sai Baba?

Advise the mind that flows so swiftly in so many directions: Dasganu advised us “Oh mind, do not drag me along the floods of objects, along the path of sensual desires, and spoil my career. Instead, take me to Lord Sainath. Flow in that direction, please.” Giving up all other desires and being ever content, dwell on His name and His form only, to the exclusion of everything else. Meditation in the name and

form is real shanti, peace; genuine santosh, contentment.

At Dwarakamayi, contentment will not make anyone an idler, remember. It is an attribute of true, sattvic, pure character. It will make the mind turn always toward the Lord. It will save you from tribulation to satisfy unimportant wants and cater to selfish needs. It will direct human talents toward efforts that elevate.

Sai Maharaj was happy to learn the way Khaparde had called the three of us ‘Guards of Dwarakamayi’

The contented person will also be truthful and will, therefore, be in constant communion with the Atman. That is to say, the contented person can be immersed in meditation for long periods without rest or the feeling of tiredness. Meditation is the only method of counteracting the mental activities that surge forward in a thousand directions; there is no other method at all.

Sai Maharaj is close behind our thoughts. Be comfortable in all environments. The capacity to concentrate is a very useful qualification. You must watch the vagaries of your mind — how it travels, what objects it runs after — and, slowly, through meditation, you should teach it to stay still and to behave beneficially.

Do not worry about the unsatisfactory environment you may have. You can overcome the drawbacks by training your mind. Stay in your environment and pray to the Lord! Pray that He may fill you with His thoughts and His vision, making you ignore the defects of the environment. Do not seek comfort, for comfort might not be conducive to meditation. Learn to be comfortable in any place; that is better. Live in joy wherever you are; that is the way. Revel in the realm of your mind; worship in the mind the Lord you have chosen as your goal and be free of all the defects of the natural or human environment. Then, no spot can be irksome to you, nor will any place seem disgusting.



Sai Baba Offers A Road Map

— by **Sri Narasimha Swamiji**

While the rest of the world was in the Stone Age, ancient India had reached the zenith of human development. The accent shifted from conquering the world to gaining control over the mind. Saints and sages guided generations of Indians to master the inner world. Sai Baba sculpted millions of Indians from the remote village of Shirdi. Success and happiness came as by-product.



ucts. If we had lost this inner enrichment, we would have faced external bankruptcy.

Like Gulliver, we are asleep to our real worth. And the Lilliputians of the world are holding us for ransom. Sai Baba has guided us to wake up to the powerhouse of knowledge we are heir to. The Bhagwad Gita, written 5,000 years ago, addresses the Arjun of today – dynamic, ambitious, young adults seeking excellence. Sai Satcharita prescribes the formula for success through words of Sai Baba's wisdom.

The young are talented, knowledgeable, and hard-working. But there are the last-minute nerves and stunning defeats that come in the way. A brilliant student well-prepared for the exams suddenly goes blank. An outstanding sportsman fails because of his obsession for the trophy. A

job aspirant who is anxious about the job fumbles at the interview.

Action is under your control. Fruit is dependent on factors beyond your influence. Dependence on the fruit makes you a slave to the world. The First Class in the exam or the Olympic Gold is not under your control. But nobody can take away your knowledge or the fact that you are an outstanding athlete. Find fulfillment in the action. Give your best to it. Enjoy it. You gain merit. You are independent of the result. And success is yours.

Fix an ideal beyond your selfish, self-centered interests. The higher the ideal, the greater the energy, enthusiasm, and creativity. If you think of the goal while acting, the mind shifts from the present action to the fruit, which belongs to the future. Your concentration slips. Action becomes flawed, and results in failure. And you are stressed out. When a student is anxious to get good marks, the mind is not on the question paper. He commits a series of mistakes and underperforms. A batsman in his nineties thinks of the hundred, not of the next ball, and gets out.

While acting, focus entirely on it. Do not allow the thought of fruit to interfere with the action. The action will be perfect. Success will be yours. And your mind will be at peace. Such a person is defined as a sannyasi – a person of renunciation.





Not a celibate priest or one who has retired to the Himalayas.

A selfish person with a myopic view of life achieves neither excellence nor is he happy. To excel and be happy one must necessarily have a higher mission in life. One must act dynamically. An inactive, lethargic person will not achieve anything.

Vedanta and its cream were prescribed by Sai Baba. It is summarized in the Gita, 3:30. It consists of two aspects – creating energy and plugging the dissipation of energy.

Energy is generated by three methods by

Sainatha Parabrahman. Lord Sainath directs the intellect and all thoughts to the chosen goal. All energies – light, wind, or water – gain power when unidirectional. 'Ekagrata' on Sainath makes all thoughts meandering in different directions lose power. The mind surrenders to Sai Parabrahman as its goal and is devoted to the ideal. When you play for the country, the power of few million Indians rests in you. And the body acts dynamically. The more you act, the more energy you generate.

This energy gets dissipated in three ways – worry over the past, anxiety for the future, and a frenzy in the present. When Sai Baba is close behind your thoughts, the intellect focuses the mind on the present action and does not allow the mind to meander into wasteful avenues of the past and future.

Nothing in the world lasts. Everything changes passes and is impermanent. So, acquire and possess the whole world. But never depend on it. Seek the one permanent anchor within. The abode of infinite bliss.

SHARE WITH OTHERS

The knowledge and skills you have earned,
The ideas and ideals you have benefited from,
And the joy you have won by discipline and dedication.
Sharing will not diminish or devalue them but on the,
Other hand, they will shine better with added splendour.

Dr. Parnvir Singh's
Pictorial
Message
for
Kids

You Are Complete And Perfect In Every Way

— by **Sri Radhakrishna Swamiji**

Here we are, the products, as it were, of this great creative activity of the immeasurable completeness and perfection of Sai Baba the Almighty, the Supreme Being. Sai Baba is utter perfection, and everything that emanates from Him as His creation is also perfect. An imperfect product does not come out of a perfect cause. Thus, the great, most venerable, infinite Eternal Being, to describe Whom as perfection would be to say very little, has willed this universe, which also is a perfection. From poorna has come poorna. This Poorna, which is the universe, has come from Poorna, the Supreme Being, and we are all a part of this Poorna, the universe. Therefore, we also are representations of that Poorna only, not fragments or shattered personalities.

Sai Baba says: "You may ask where I am now and how I can meet you now. But I am within your heart and we can meet without any effort".
– Shri Sai Baba (Chap 44, Ovi 162)

All of us here, and everyone who is in any part of the world or any other world, all these beings we call living or non-living, moving or non-moving, animate or inanimate, call them by any designation, are also perfections, Poorna. Only Poorna emanates from Poorna, and therefore every one of you is also a Poorna ... None of us is a fragment. This is very important for us to remember. We are not incomplete in any way.

Let us recite the universal prayer:
May the wicked turn good
May the good attain peace
May the peaceful be freed from all bondage and
May the liberated redeem others.

May everybody be happy
May everybody be free from disease
May everybody have good luck
May none fall on evil days;
May everybody surmount difficulties
May everybody have the good fortune
May everybody realize his ambitions
May everybody rejoice everywhere.

Many of us have distracted notions of our selves – poor, illiterate ideas of our being nothing, nobodies, unfulfilled, incomplete, and unfortunate. Nothing

of the kind is the case with anyone or with anything because a wretched incomplete wreck cannot be manifest from a perfect being. If you believe you have come from that One Being, you are not that which you imagine yourselves to be under a false notion of yourself in your artificial adjustments and accommodations with a phenomenon we call human society which, to repeat once again, is also, in its essentiality, a symbol of perfection itself.

We read in Sai Satcharita - "If you recite 'Sai, Sai,' always, I will take you beyond the seven seas. If you believe in these words, you will be certainly benefited".
– (Chap 13, Ovi 11-13)

The whole universe is a radiant manifestation of the Almighty's perfection. Glory is the name of this world. 'Yasya nama mahad yasa', says the Svetasvatara Upanishad. The glory of God is also the glory of this world; it is also the glory of every one of us, every one of you. Each one, even in the littlest of the forms of manifestation, is a completion in itself. Even an atom is a complete manifestation and is not a little part of something. You do not belong to anyone, and nothing belongs to you. The idea of something belonging to something else is the idea of subservience and fragmentation of personality. A thing that is complete cannot belong to something else, and if everything is complete, nothing can belong to anything. Neither can you belong to anything, nor can anything belong to you, because all these little manifestations of completion, perfection, Poorna, belong to the eternal perfection which is the Supreme-Being.

Sai Baba has commanded - "*Such pious persons have become my followers whose sins have been destroyed and they have understood me.*" – (Chap 13, Ovi 11-13)

These ideas, these thoughts, these contemplations even for a few moments will charge your personality with such strength, energy, joy, and satisfaction that you may not wish to even open your mouth. You will feel that everything is well.

**Om purnam adah, purnam idam,
purnat purnam udacyate;
purnasya purnam adaya purnam evavasisyate.**

IshAvAsya Mantra # 16

— by **Jayakrishna Nelamangala**

In this mantra, the Upanishat seems to be talking about sun and sun-rays. Some say that it is the sun's brightly shining disc that is blocking us from seeing God. Such physicality is not what the Upanishat is talking about because, if that were true, then during a solar eclipse when the brightness is absent, we should have seen God, at least partially. This is why, such interpretations of this mantra are not proper. Then, what is the proper interpretation?

In this mantra, several mahimās of Parabrahman are established: sarva-pravartaka (pūṣan), pradhāna-jāna-rūpatva (ēkarṣē), rishi-pravartakatva (ēkarṣē), sarva-niyāmakatva, jñāni-prāpyatva (sūrya), attainability by hiraṇyagarbha in a very special way (prājāpatya), svarūpa-bāhya-jāna pravartakatva, kalyāṇa-rūpatva, and tad jānasya tat-prasādaika-sādhyatva. What has been established as the qualities of Parabrahman in the previous mantras is stated in this mantra, in the form of this "prayer".

उपनिषत् upaniṣat

पूषन्नेकर्षे यम सूर्य प्राजापत्य व्यूह रश्मीन् समूह तेजो
यत्ते रूपम् कल्याणतमं तत्ते पश्यामि ॥ १६ ॥

pūṣannēkarṣē yama sūrya prājāpatya vyūha
raśmīn samūha tējō yattē rūpam kalyāṇatama tattē
paśyāmi || 16 ||

Oh pūrṇa! The Complete (हे पूषन् hē pūṣan), Oh the pradhāna-jāni! (एकर्षे ēkarṣē), Oh! by being the sarva-niyāmakatva, Yama-pravartaka, the Controller of Yama (यम yama) Oh! the One who is attainable by the knowledgeable, oh! the Controller of Sūrya (सूर्य sūrya), Oh! the One who is attainable by Caturmukha in an extraordinary way (प्राजापत्य prājāpatya), Oh! Parabrahman, bring out my svarūpa-jāna and expand my vritti-jāna (व्यूह रश्मीन् समूह तेजो vyūha raśmīn samūha tējō), and also that most auspicious form of Yours (यत्ते रूपम् कल्याणतमं yattē rūpam kalyāṇatama) that Form I will get the direct knowledge of it, by Your prasāda, grace (तत्ते पश्यामि tattē paśyāmi).

NOTES:

1) Parabrahman is सर्व-वस्तु-प्रवर्तक sarva-vastu-pravartaka. The upaniṣat is bringing to light His All-Doership by these mahimās. The jnyāni who understands this secret, only understands the sarva-kartṛtva or the work of Parabrahman in everything he sees such as Sun, Yama, etc., and that jnyāni understands Parabrahman's dēva-dē-

vatva . These mantras bring out the fact that to recall or anu-smaraṇa of the upaniṣat siddhānta itself is the prayer. There is no prayer, without this siddhānta.

2) jāna knowledge is of two kinds - internal and external

The external knowledge of objects is generated by sense organs and mind. The internal knowledge itself is of the nature of self. It is anādi and nitya. For both kinds of knowledge, Parabrahman is the pravartaka. Without Him, there is neither external knowledge nor internal knowledge. One should study other upaniṣats such as mādṛūkā to get a better understanding of this mahimā of Vedic Parabrahman described as Vishwa-taijasa-prājnya in mādṛūkā upaniṣat.

3) The form of Parabrahman as sarva-pravartaka is kalyāṇa-tama. i.e, there is nothing which is more auspicious than that. For an adhikārin, there is nothing that is more auspicious than knowing It. Refer to an earlier mantra, "shuddham apāpaviddham" - Parabrahman is pāvitya-hetu. The other interpretations using "removal of sun-rays" etc is uncalled for. What about the words pūshan and Yama? Both these words are also interpreted to mean Sun!!

4) Several other upaniṣats establish the fact that Sun does not operate on his own. Study taittareeya "भीष्मास्मात् वातः पवते भीषोदेति सूर्यः bhīṣmāt vātaḥ pavatē bhīṣōdēti sūryaḥ "(Because of His fear, i.e., under His Control, Sun rises and wind blows). "न तत् भासयते सूर्यो na tat bhāsayatē sūryō" teaches śrīkrishṇa in the geetā, "न तत्र सूर्यो भाति न चन्द्रतारकं na tatra sūryō bhāti na candratāraka" teaches kaṭhōpaniṣat.

This being the case, do you pray to the Sun? Or to the Controller of Sun which is the One controller of all? Every luminous object in this universe receives its brightness from an iota of the infinite effulgence of Parabrahman. Readers should study, "ॐ अनुकृतेः तस्य च ॐ ōm anukṛtēḥ tasya ca ōm" of the brahma-sūtras and get a better understanding on this.

5) pradhāna-jāna-rūpa Parabrahman is the only rishi called एकर्षे ēkarṣē. This really helps while understanding Parabrahman of the vēda. The concept expands into the fact that vēda-rishi is paramātma which goes a long way in establishing the apourushēyatva of vēda i.e., unauthorship of Veda and also establishes the fact that all of vēda is there to teach only Vedic Brahman.

śrī kṛṣṇārpaṇamastu,

Mystics and Saints

— by **Shreyas Devaraj**



Prahalad Muley Shastri

He accompanied Booty Saheb to Sai Baba. He was egositic that he was a Brahmin and did not want to bow down to Baba. Baba corrected his ego as he gave him a vision of his Guru, Gholap Maharaj.



Savitribai Tendulkar

She came to Baba with her ailing son. Baba glanced at him and healed off his epilepsy. The entire family became devotees of Baba.



Kakaji Appaji Vaidya

He was a priest at Saptashrungi Temple at Vani. Baba made him come to Shiridi by giving him a vision and also arranging for Shama to bring him to Shiridi in a unique manner.



Dhamuanna

Baba gave Dhamuanna mystic visions regarding several investments and prevented him from losing a lot of wealth. Even later devotees refer to Dhamuanna's experience before investing in a business or other speculations.



Sai Baba Mantra Purascharana

— by **Sri Swami Sivananda**

The repetition of a Mantra 'Om Sairam' with rigid spiritual observances a fixed number of times to obtain quick spiritual progress is known as Mantra Purascharana. It can be performed for material progress too. Sai Baba has not prescribed practitioners should observe specific rules and undergo strict dietetic discipline to ensure quick Mantra Siddhi.

During the Purascharana take only fresh vegetables, fruits, milk, roots, barley, and Havis-Anna (rice cooked with ghee, sugar, and milk). A Sadhaka can live on pure Bhiksha (alms) also. If you can live on milk alone during the period of Purascharana it is highly laudable. You can have Mantra Siddhi even by repeating the Mantra a lakh times.

Select any holy place or a quiet place in your residence or a place of pilgrimage like the banks of the sacred Ganga, confluence of rivers, mountain valleys of charming scenery, temples, or Tulasi gardens, below Asvattha. Keep a picture of Sai Baba, burning incense, and suitable decorations. Purascharana done in holy places has more benefits. Select 'Om Sairam' or Santha Namoh or Sai Gayatri for Purascharana. Your Guru Mantra or Ishta Mantra is the best. Sandhya time, sunrise, sunset, and midday are all recommended for Japa. Repeat the Mantra as many lakhs of times as there are letters in the Mantra. You can do half of that number. In no case, the number should be less than a lakh.

Sit facing East or North during Japa. Select Siddha, Padma, Svastika or Virasana for Japa. Never sit for Japa with a loaded stomach. Have fixed timings for Japa. Take a bath before you start, if possible, or at least wash your hands and feet. Perform Achamana or sipping of Sanctified Mantra water. Deerskin, cloth, blanket, Kusa grass, or tiger skin can be used as seats while doing Japa. Spatika, Tulasi, or Rudraksha Malas can be used for counting the number of Japa. Have a Mala with 108 beads or half or one-fourth of that number.

Abstracting the mind from all worldly objects, merged in the inner meaning of the Mantra, thinking of the Lord, the Mantra should be repeated with a uniform speed. The full concentration of the mind on the meaning and divinity of the Mantra brings quick Mantra Siddhi. Continue Purascharana till you attain Mantra Siddhi. Do not stop with one Purascharana. Due to the Doshas of the mind, you may not get Mantra Siddhi at once. Madhusudana Sarasvati did 18 Purascharanas of Gayatri

before he attained Siddhi.

Sleeping on a coarse bed (strictly avoiding cushions and the like), observing strict celibacy, worshipping Sai Baba three times a day, bathing thrice daily, abandoning oil baths, meat, fish, onion, garlic, tea, coffee, chilies, tamarind, observing silence or restricting the speech to a minimum, observing

Ahimsa, speaking Truth, shunning all luxuries, one should perform the Purascharana. You should avoid as far as possible absent-mindedness, laziness, spitting during Japa, relaxation of hands and legs, sleeping during the day, mixing with undesirable persons, contact with women, receiving gifts, looking at obscene pictures, speaking lies, the company of passionate men, chewing of betels, smoking, drinking, too much talk, speaking ill of others, finding fault in others, harming others in thought, word or deed, during the period of Purascharana. You should not dissipate your energy during Japa by looking hither and thither unnecessarily by shaking the body, by laughter, etc.

Do the same number of Japa every day without variation. Homa or Havan should be performed after every lakh of Japa or at the end of the Purascharana. After completing the Purascharana perform Homa the number of Japa, Tarpana (water libations) the number of Homa, Marjana (sprinkling) the number of Tarpana and feeding of Brahmins the number of Tarpana. You can do feeding and charity according to your capacity if you cannot adhere to the above strictly.

Mantra Purascharana has incalculable benefits. Brightness, clearness, or tranquillity of the mind, contentment, dispassion towards worldly enjoyments, Darshan of your Ishta Devata, Sai Baba, success in all undertakings, attainment of purity of the mind—all these will ensue. Give your best attention and earnestness to the performance of Purascharana.

May you attain Moksha or Immortality through the performance of a series of Sai Baba Mantra Purascharanas! (From a lecture at All India Sai Samaj, Madras - 1950)



All you have to do is to be happy

— by **Dwarika Mohan Misra**

Sai Baba says our only real duty in life is to be happy, cheerful, and full of mirth and mischief, irrespective of what the world offers. The fountainhead of happiness Sai Maharaj is within. Not just happiness but infinite happiness. This is possible only when you get to Perfection and surrender to Lord Sainath close behind your thoughts.

Ancient seers were intrigued. Is it possible for the ordinary, finite human to transform into the extraordinary, infinite, superhuman? They found the formula for Perfection. Human minus desire is Sai Maharaj who is the God, the Perfect Person. Desire prevents you from achieving success, makes you unhappy, and keeps you stunted and dwarfed. We are so caught up with the desire that we cannot conceive of a state free from it. The Sai Satchaita – our Bhagwad Gita does not ask you to give up desire. It only asks you to do what you are familiar with – just escalate to a higher desire, a more fulfilling one.

You have grown from infancy to adulthood by doing just what the Lord Sainath prescribes. At every stage, you conceived of a higher state, struggled for it, and achieved it. From having only a rattle for entertainment, you moved to toys, gadgets, teenage delights, and adult aspirations. You only have to rekindle this growth-propelling mode.

In Plato's metaphor, while the rest of the tribe were content to live in a dark cave, one young man thought there had to be something beyond their little world and decided to explore. He plodded on till he came out and found a beautiful, magnificent world. Life as we know it is pretty much like the cave. We experience deprivation when we are blessed with abundance. We are sorrowful when we should be deliriously happy.

My Guru, Sri Ganeshnathji Maharaj states that all we need is inspiration. A mother who is inspired to do her very best for her child breaks through physical barriers and excels. A scientist on the verge of an important discovery rises above physical

limitations as well as emotional hang-ups. Finally, when you are consumed by a spiritual goal like realizing Lord Sai in your life, you smash through all barriers.

Develop the intellect. Shun impulsive, thoughtless living and move to a life led by the intellect and guided by Sai Maharaj. When the intellect gains strength, you become more objective and in control of your life.

While acting, move from thinking only of yourself to accommodating the welfare of others. The higher the ideal you work for, the greater will be your success. Athletes perform better when they play for the country versus just playing for personal records. Selfishness gives sorrow. Finally, a selfless person understands a divine Power as Sai Maharaj has bestowed the talent on him and dedicates his actions to that Mahatma. This makes for excellence.

When you genuinely love others unconditionally, you live a happy life. In the end, when you are aware of a Power that has blessed you with a million things, you develop gratitude and turn your attention from the world to the Beyond.

The intellect becomes sharp when you begin to reflect on the distinction between the permanent and the impermanent. Then you embark on the search for the Permanent. That journey is thrilling, and the destination is infinite happiness.



Adorations to Mother Tarkhad

— by **Ramaswamy Seshadri**

Mother Tarabai Sadasiv Tarkhad was the wife of Sadasiv Tarkhad, brother of Ramachandra Atmaram Tarkhad who was the Secretary of Khatau Mills, Bombay. R.A.Tarkhad once visited Shirdi and told Mother Tarabai about the greatness of Sai Baba. At that time her daughter, Nalini Tarkhad who was 15 months old was seriously ill and she took a vow that if Baba heals her she would visit Shirdi with the child for Baba's darshan. Immediately, the child got cured miraculously and then she visited Shirdi. The child grew happily and later became a famous film star, Ms, Nalini Jaywant.



Ramachandra Atmaram was a follower of Prarthana Samaj and did not believe in idol worship. Tarkhads did not like the orthodox religious scruples and were against Idol-worship and visiting saints and sages. But due to the efforts of his wife, Tarabai, Sadasiv Tarkhad became a staunch devotee of Baba.

Once Tarabai visited Shirdi and at that time Shirdi was a small village without any basic facilities. She would have trampled a cobra on the way but Baba saved her.

Once when she was in Shirdi, she had a severe eye infection with unbearable pain. Then she went to the masjid and sat before Baba. Baba looked

at her and then the pain from the infection was relieved instantly.

Once she was sitting near Baba in the masjid, when a leper came to the masjid with his advanced disease. The leper was stinking and he had little strength left in him. With much difficulty, he very slowly climbed the three steps of the masjid, came to Baba, and placed his head on Baba's feet. He took much time for Baba's darshan and all the while she was feeling the foul stench from him intensely and hoped that he would clear off quickly. Then he walked down slowly with a small parcel wrapped up in a dirty cloth. She felt immediate relief and thanked God within herself as the leper went down. Sai Baba at once looked at her and she immediately understood that Baba had already read her thoughts. As the leper was moving further, Baba immediately sent someone from the masjid to fetch the leper back. The same leper again had come and again the slow process of his climbing up the masjid steps continued while emitting the foul stench all the time and when the leper bowed to Baba, Baba picked up that parcel, enquiring about it and opened it. It contained some pedas (sweets). Baba took up a piece and gave it to Mother. This also emphasized the supreme principle that in the presence of Baba, no danger would touch anybody.



Sadasiv's Factory Once Tarabai went to Shirdi with her husband, Sadasiv, and had their servant accompany them. Their servant had severe backache which got relieved with a glance from Baba.

In 1915. Tarabai was having severe neuralgic headaches and tried all types of treatments but they were of no use. Baba asked her to bathe in Godavari and she was miraculously healed. Tarabai's husband, Sadasiv was working as Manager in a textile mill in Pune for some time and then lost his job. He came to Shirdi to seek Baba's blessings in getting a job and stayed there for some days. One day Baba told Sadasiv that Tatya Patil and others were going to Ahmednagar to see the cinema and asked Sadasiv to accompany them and see the cinema in Ahmednagar and then go to Poona and home. Hearing this from the mouth of Baba, he was perplexed and he followed Baba's advice. In Pune, he came across his ex-employer who was



frantically searching for him to be reemployed as there was a labor problem. Sadashiv got back his job.

Sri. Narasimha Swamiji has referred to her as 'Mrs. Manager.' In the interview, she also said that Baba used to sit in the early mornings near the Dhuni and wave hands and fingers, making some gestures which, of course, conveyed no meaning to outsiders, but conveyed, some directions to

Panchbhutas (five elements) for the welfare of the public in general and of the devotees in particular. And at the end, Baba used to say, "Haq" which means God Almighty. Whenever Baba wanted to bestow ecstasy on his devotees, he would dart out drishtipath (shots of divine Grace-look) to them making them ecstatic for a longer time.

Even after Baba's Mahasamadhi, Baba was helping the devotees. Once in 1927, Tarabai was on a pilgrimage and she had a missed abortion. She had timely medical help. He is a great saint

Give ONE Word Answer

1. What was Dasganu's occupation?
2. Where did Upasani Maharaj attain Mahasamadhi?
3. From where did Goda Mata come to Sakori?
4. Where is Javar Ali's Samadhi situated?
5. Where is the Samadhi of Swami Sharannanda?
6. When did Mhalsapati pass away?
7. Who distributed Baba's pictures free of cost?
8. When did Megha attain Samadhi?
9. What was the occupation of Mhalsapati?
10. Where does Booty Saheb hail from?
11. Name Justice Noolkar's son who was a doctor.
12. What is the name of Kaka Dixit's daughter?

Gift of Nine Children

— by **D. Sankaraiah**

The Sapatnekar family came from a village called Sapatne and settled in Madhegaon, the taluk headquarters. They were a family of lawyers. Mahadev Waman Sapatnekar was a prominent, successful, and rich lawyer in Akkalkot and his father also was a lawyer.

When Mahadev Waman Sapatnekar was studying law, a friend co-student by the name of Shevade told him of his confidence in passing the Law examination as Sai Baba of Shirdi had blessed him, but Mahadev couldn't fathom how a begging fakir in Shirdi would make him pass the examination and made fun of Shevade as well as Sai Baba. Later it was observed that Shevade passed the examination, to their surprise. After graduation, Mahadev started practicing as a pleader in Akkalkot in 1893. Later he got married and had a son. After some time he lost his son due to a throat disease in 1913. He went on pilgrimage and visited holy places like Pandharpur, Gangapur, and others, but was unable to get peace of mind.

Mahadev was a devotee of Datta and would frequently go to Gangapur.

His wife, Parvatibai Sapatnekar was married at the age of 13.

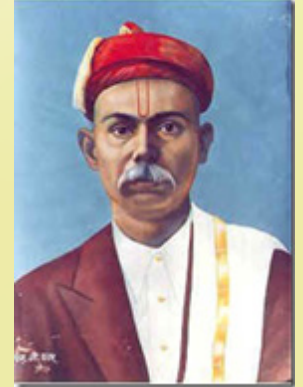
Mahadev was very sad because his only son had died and was always unhappily thinking about him. At this stage, his father told them about Sai Baba of Shirdi and asked them to visit Shirdi as many people had gone there and found peace. Mahadev did not have faith in Baba and was unwilling to visit Shirdi for Baba's darshan.

However, to respect his father's words, he went to Shirdi in 1913, taking his brother Pandithrao along with him.

In the masjid, when Sapatnekar approached Baba to touch his feet and salute him, Baba suddenly shouted, saying, "Chal hut!" (Go away)! and also pushed him away with so much force that his head fell at a distance and then he came out of the masjid unhappily.

Mahadev's father insisted that he visit Shirdi again and take his wife along to take Sai Baba's darshan. He also said that there should be some reason why Baba was so angry with Mahadev. He also asked Mahadev to take his elder sister-in-law along, as she had only daughters and no son. Seeing his father's firm order, Mahadev started and reached Shirdi with his wife and sister-in-law.

When they reached Shirdi, Mahadev's wife was surprised to observe that Baba was the same person who had appeared in her dream. Because of her sincere devotion and humility, Baba called her and uttered the following statement, "My stomach, waist, hands, and



legs are paining for several days. Despite using several medicines, there is no relief. After coming here the pains have subsided." Though Baba looked healthy, he expressed like this and she understood that the matter was related to her and also thought that how Baba knew all her problems. She also felt that she was going to get well after Baba's darshan.

Mahadev went with folded hands near Baba. Again this time, Baba asked him to get out. Mahadev then realized by introspection that this was the result of insulting his friend, Shevade and Baba. He blamed himself for his past deeds and realized that because of his past misconduct, he was facing this unpleasant situation then. He also told Baba that he was ignorant of Baba's divinity and earnestly begged Baba to forgive him. Baba blessed him and put his hand on Mahadev's head and stroked it.

Mahadev and his wife were still there in Shirdi. He told his wife in detail all that had happened in the masjid with Baba. He said that Baba was an ocean of kindness and a divine saint. He told her to get ready for the arati puja after preparing puranpolis (chapatis with sweet content inside) as an offering for Baba. However, one of the priests there told them that halwa (sweet) would also make a better offering, so they prepared halwa and took it on a plate to the masjid as naivedya to Baba. After the arati was over, the various offerings to Baba were kept ready in front of him. Even though their plate was slightly far away, Baba bent down, took some halwa, and ate it with relish. They felt extremely happy and offered their heartfelt thanks to Baba for his kindness.

Afterwards, Baba took two rupees as dakshina from Mahadev. He gave a coconut to him and asked him to put it in the lap of his wife and also told him that they will have nine children.

Parvatibai Sapatnekar was alive 65 years after Baba's Mahasamadhi. She passed away on 30th October 1983.

Turn To Sai Baba Always And The Gita

— by **Seetha Vijayakmar**

Do you find yourself torn between the devil and the deep blue sea? Are you cruising along and suddenly you get knocked down by a challenge? Do you get overwhelmed by doubt and indecision? Lord Sainath and Sai Satcharita help you resolve the conflict within -

“One who concentrates on ME, for him nothing is difficult. But the moment he forgets ME, Maya will attack him.” – Shri Sai Baba (Chap 3, Ovi 143-148)

Though 5,000 years old, the Gita is timeless. The inner space of uncertainty and indecision, emptiness, and unfulfillment that Arjuna faced is one we all know. The eternal principles of the Gita have inspired generations of young seekers across the world to gain victory over their frailties. All challenges are within. You have to gain mastery over yourself to win external problems.

Arjuna gets pushed into battle and buckles under the challenge. Krishna says there is no place for grief in life. He speaks of joy, cheer, and exhilaration. All problems stem from slight maladjustment within. Correct that and the problems vanish.- “Whatever is perceived is my image only, whether it is a worm, an ant, a poor wretch or a king.” – Shri Sai Baba (Chap 3, Ovi 143-148)

Dhritrashtra, the blind king and father of the Kauravas, asked Sanjay, the commentator of the battle, what his sons and the sons of Pandu were doing. The root of all conflict and war is a feeling of separateness – mine versus yours – which Dhritrashtra displays. Pandu was his brother. He should have seen Pandu’s sons as his own. But he views them as enemies.

Dhritrashtra epitomizes the mind, the abode of emotions and feelings. The mind is blind. Gandhari represents the intellect, the domain of judgment and discrimination. The intellect can see. However, when the intellect gets smitten with emotion, it gets blinded too. This is indicated by Gandhari blinding herself after marrying Dhritrashtra. The result is devastation and destruction.

“Such pious persons have become my followers whose sins have been destroyed and they have understood me.” – (Chap 13, Ovi 11-13)

Sanjay points to Duryodhan’s arrogance. Arrogance blocks the intake of knowledge. Duryodhana disregards the wise counsel of elders like Bhishma and Dronacharya and embarks on this foolhardy battle.

Duryodhana’s army is one and a half times that of the Pandavas, and yet he is insecure.





Insecurity stems from viciousness, wrongdoing, and a feeling of otherness. A warrior's strength comes from noble ideals. Duryodhana has nothing but his selfishness and foolishness to fall back on.

"Whatever is perceived is my image only, whether it is a worm, an ant, a poor wretch or a king." – Shri Sai Baba (Chap 3, Ovi 143-148)

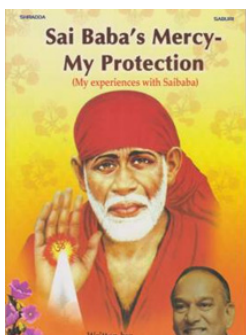
Arjuna is battle-ready and asks Krishna to drive him between the two armies so he may see those who have gathered to please Duryodhana. Krishna drives Arjuna in front of Bhishma and Drona to show that not everyone is there to pander to Duryodhana. He wants Arjuna to follow their example and just do his duty. Arjuna, however, succumbs to sentiment. He sees in the enemy lines his beloved patriarch Bhishma who had renounced the kingdom for which they were fighting. He sees his guru Dronacharya who had taught him archery. He sees relatives when he should see warriors. When the emotion comes in the way of intellectual conviction he falters and falls. He makes absurd arguments to justify his stand

and displays false vairagya and dispassion. Confused and exhausted, he collapses, unable to stand, his mind whirling, mouth dry, body trembling, and hair standing on end.

Thus, the mighty Arjuna breaks down, overcome with frail pity, oblivious of his obligation as a Kshatriya, ruler, to uphold dharma -- righteousness. When we lack a higher vision, we are weakened by wavering emotions. We get bogged down by irrelevant things. The intellect gets clouded and we embark on a disastrous action plan. This is Arjuna's state. "You may go anywhere on the face of this earth, I am always with you. I reside in your heart and I am within you" – Shri Sai Baba (Chap 15, Ovi 67-73)

Arjuna had not asked for the war. Yet he had to play a central role in it. He had to first resolve the conflict between his head and his heart, both of which are saying different things. The stage was set for Krishna to teach Arjuna, and through him, all confused and troubled souls down the ages. Millions of people have turned to the Gita in their hour of crisis and found the light of wisdom, the clear path out of darkness to Truth. And so will we if we listen to Krishna's advice with an open mind. Do not keep a distance from me. There is no difference between you and ME. Whoever regards ME in this way, he is indeed fortunate." – Shri Sai Baba (Chap 15, Ovi 67-73)

BOOK REVIEW



Title : Sai Baba's Mercy, My Protection

Author : Justice Sri B Chandra Kumar

Publisher : Smt. Narmada Chandra Kumar

8-7-55/B/2, Sri Shirdi Sai Nagar Colony, Hastinapuram Central,
Nagarjuna Sagar Road, Hyderabad – 560079

Pages : 163 + xii

Price : Rs. 200/-

Baba's assurances to devotees have been depicted admirably well. The attributes of a devotee have been presented in an extremely simple and easy-to-understand language and in Bhakti Sutras, it seems as though a whole ocean has been compressed into a pot.

I have a strong feeling that the devotee, who studies this book, shall not need to read any other book on Sai Baba, as it is comprehensive. The answer to each and every problem concerning Sai bhakti confronted by a devotee would become available to him in this book. In the end, it is my prayer that Sai Baba's 'Kripa' and the affection of Justice B Chandra Kumar may remain available to all Sai devotees.

Reviewed by: Dr. C Dwarakanath Gupta

Lakshmi Resides on the tip of Your Tongue

— by **Smt. Sunanda Ananth**

According to Sai Maharaj each of us is a portal of mutual exchange between human consciousness and the environment. We can make a significant difference to society, the planet, and the cosmos.

The Sanskrit word for 'world' is 'Loka'. It shares its root sound with the word 'locana' meaning 'to see'. However, the eyes are only one of the ten interfaces, between you and the animated, intelligent universe. The ten faculties of give and take between man and the universe are the Indriya, senses.

The word 'Indriya' is derived from the word 'Indra', which is the universal archetype of leadership. The mind perceives the truth of Sai Baba – the Parabrahman precisely when it is not a slave of temptations, memories, and momentum of past actions. Such a mind is Indra, the master of Indriya

The information of the external world pours into the mind through the jnana Indriyas also called Special Senses – ears, eyes, nose, skin, and tongue. The vibrations channeled from these special senses are – shabda, sound; rupa, sight; gandha, smell; sparsha, touch; and rasa, taste, and for everyone it is Sai Baba who coordinates all of them.

Further interaction with the environment occurs through one's five karma Indriyas – hands, feet, mouth, anus, and genitals. Thus, a give and take are brought into play guided by one's past experiences and personality and his implicit faith in Sai Parabrahman. Thus, the eternal cycle of karma is self-perpetrated but under Baba's control.

Karma shapes your destiny. Each vibration you create is an autonomous, infallible energy that impacts the cosmos and rebounds back to you. This cycle follows a universal rhythm called Rtam, which maintains dharma.



'Rtam vadishyami' is a resolution one makes to respect Rtam and uphold dharma not just in actions but in thought and speech as well. Sound as Shabda Brahman, the logos becomes akshara, syllables; varna, letters; and vakya, sentences, and evolves through four layers of speech. All speech already exists as a potential within you. This is para vaak, a transcendental sound. From this sprouts pashyanti vaak, inspired speech. This is the realm of fluidly inclusive abstract visions, which are a precursor of contemplative thoughts.

The speech further evolves to pondering and evaluating, by thought and counter thought – madhyama vaak. This culminates in the final stage, which is vaikhari vaak, articulate speech. This is the point when we chant Vishnu Sahasranama or Sai-Taraka Mantra – Om Sai Sri Sai Jaya Jaya Sai, the ultimate 'vaikhari vaak' is ingrained in our tongue. The vaikhari vaak is generated by air passing over the vocal cords and the tongue touching various parts of the mouth. Like an arrow once released from the bow cannot be brought back, a word once uttered cannot be annulled.

Indra, the illumined mind, integrates all the stages of speech to engender sagacious speech. However, the weakness of Indra is his ego. The ego is your identity. Its designated purpose is to make you a strong individual. However, it also blurs the line between self-assertion and aggressiveness leading to the arrogance of King Indra.

It is not a cosmic coincidence that Brihaspati, Jupiter, is the master of both – buddhi -- wisdom, and speech. When speech is aligned with wisdom, the ego is subjected to the triple filter of Satyam, truth; Hitam, beneficial; and Priyam, pleasant, and this can result in a conscious, appropriate speech. A couplet from the Subhashitas says: Lakshmi, the Goddess of prosperity and harmony, resides on the tip of your tongue, as do friends and relatives. Through the tip of your tongue, you can get bondage, and it is certain that through the tip of one's tongue, one can even face death.

See Sai Baba in you

— by **Mrs. Maheswari S.Kumar**

What amounts to the essence of life is the knowledge that with implicit faith Sai Baba, can be realized. We, unlike other animals, have enough insight to evaluate life and its purpose. We can decide who we are, where we have come from, and where, after the demise of this mortal coil, we are to go. We, as human beings, have the consciousness to analyze all this.

We can look at this logically or through the aid of Sai Satcharita and Baba's Charters and other scriptures. For we, as the atma, individual soul, are part of what we call the Sai Parabrahman's omnipresent spirit. We can recognize while living our lives, the very form of Lord Sainath. This is exactly what Arjuna realized on the battlefield of Kurukshetra. Sri Narasimha Swamiji. Sri Radhakrishna Swamiji, Meher Baba, Ravidas, Kabir, Tukka Ram, Meera, and many other saints here and abroad, also experienced Parabrahman, which elevated their lives above others.

The Apostles of Sai Baba- Sri Narasimha Swamiji. Sri Radhakrishna Swamiji, Meher Baba, and others' introduction to Sai Maharaj is akin to a candle that can illuminate the darkest of rooms. Through it, we can fully realize Him. Though called by different names all over the world, it is ultimately one and only One Lord Sainath. Although He is one in essence, we cannot believe in Him if we do not know Him as one. Quite naturally, just as we have to know someone before we believe in him, the One God also has to be known before we can believe in Him.

It is important to realize that though different in diet and dress, we have all emanated from the same Source. It is, therefore, only by knowing God that we can believe in Him and henceforth become Him.

If we were to look at the process of boiling water, we see that we require fire, water, and a vessel. We can pour the water into a vessel, which when placed on the fire eventually boils. But if we were to pour the

water directly onto the fire, not only is the fire doused but the water is never boiled. What is of the utmost importance in this process, is the vessel – the medium through which the task can be accomplished.

In life similarly, we too need a medium – Sadguru, a true master, with whose help we can realize the difference in the behavior of the enlightened and the ignorant. In the absence of such a Sadguru Maharaj as a medium, we cannot transform from one state to the other. With the advent of such a medium, the heart harboring hatred can be transformed into a loving one.

Hence, sitting in a Sai Mandir sangat, at a Sai Baba gathering, and being decent, attentive, and disciplined is not enough. The sangat's import – significant learning and wisdom – has to be firmly planted into the mind, so that not even a single trace of darkness remains. Just as the rising sun illuminates everything everywhere, the light of the congregation works the same way.

This light of Sai Baba, the God, should positively touch everybody for the better. With it, we should move towards the state of large-heartedness, leaving behind our narrow-mindedness forever. We should be recognized by humility, perseverance, and tolerance.

Looking like human beings is not enough. It is not human features but human value Sai Baba teaches, such as love, compassion, and tolerance that make us humans. Such human values should be cultivated and brought to the fore. For it is only in so doing that we can know One Sai Baba, believe in One Sai Baba and become One Sai Baba.

Baba has commanded us – “Do not keep at a distance from me. There is no difference between you and ME. Whoever regards ME in this way, he is indeed fortunate.” – Shri Sai Baba (Chap 15, Ovi 67-73)



Ego is a Tool We Master or One That Masters Us

— by **B. Rajeshwari**

Sri Radhakrishna Swamiji stated that everybody has divinity as well as ego. But ego is inversely proportional to Divinity. That is, if you are simple and humble you are full of divinity and if you are egoistic, you have zero divinity. Sai Baba has stated - “Such pious persons have become my followers whose sins have been destroyed and they have understood me.” – (Chap 13, Ovi 11-13)

From the moment we're born, whether our birth arrives in India, Africa, Europe, or America, whether we're born black or white, rich or poor, tall or short, capable of wisdom or not, able to see or not, able to walk or not, whether or not we are healthy, or sick, born to Christian, Hindu or Muslim, Buddhist, Jain, agnostic or atheist parents, whether or not we are born in the mountains, cities, deserts, or on islands in the far seas, every human being, all of us, are taught associatively to attach our identity to the identity of the person, persons, stricture, customs, and place of our birth, to attach identity to our name, looks, thoughts, feelings, senses, and actions. We are taught that identity attachment is needed to survive, to shield us from social exclusion, and to gain purpose, value, and worth in our own eyes and that of other people. We are taught that ego defines us even while ego is inserted into the center of our identity before we're old enough to decide who we are for ourselves. We're taught what to think before learning how to think. This means the choice is taken from us. And we grow up believing ego is who we are, an identity that binds us to what has been.

Sai Baba has stated - “If you recite ‘Sai, Sai,’ always, I will take you beyond the seven seas. If you believe in these words, you will be certainly benefited”. – (Chap 13, Ovi 11-13)

If we study the lives of several close associates of Baba we come across many with positive and negative aspects. Baba corrected an arrogant Dasganu to a great Kirthankar and Nana Saheb Chandorkar to evolve as a role model devotee. Whoever was proud of belonging to a superior caste was made to become a Sai devotee. How do we discern this, and verify the truth or falsehood of



so provocative a statement? First, we ask — where does life take place?

Life takes place in the present. What lives, if it lives, lives here and now. What the present is, however, and how fast it's going by, we cannot discern, but we do know the present is not what we remember, not what we imagine will happen.

The problem, while our body lives in the present, and processes the present through its senses, actions, feelings, and thoughts, our attention to and awareness of the same, is rarely in the present with our body.

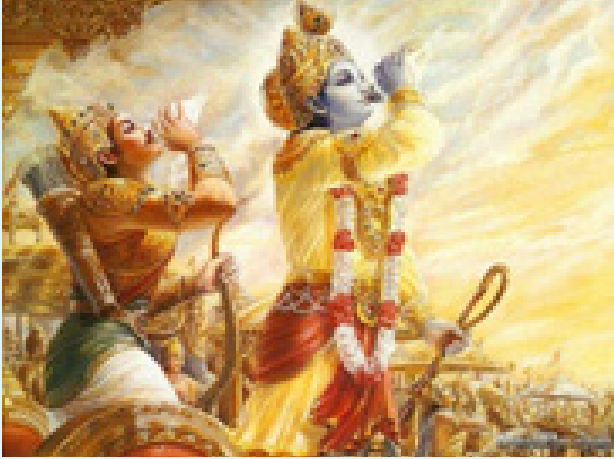
An ego is a tool. One that we master or one that masters us. To know this, Sai Satcharita has many examples. Dada Khelkar insulted many with his ego. With Baba's blessings, he became a lovable person.

Sai Baba's assurance – “The whole universe is my home. I am myself Vasudev and all-pervading God. I am myself the Parabrahma.” – (Chap 9, Ovi 47)

To verify that ego is a past and future tense event, not a present tense event, gives us cause to observe ego rather than be ego. Cause to detach from and escape the twin tides of remembrance and future imaging that so relentlessly drive our focus of attention to define who we are through who we were, or will be, and not who we are now, here, at this moment.

Do We Want Temporary Happiness or Permanent Bliss?

— by **Dinesh Chikkaballapur**



Do we want temporary happiness or permanent bliss? Why are we not happy in the first place? What is wanting? Why is others' approval so essential for us?

Let's turn to the Sai Satchrita or the Bhagwad Gita for some answers. For one, the words 'pleasure' and 'bliss' are often used interchangeably, there is a mix-up, seldom considered odd in literature. Poets too often take the liberty of using one for the other.

To end this confusion, Krishna in the Gita has drawn a clear line and cautioned everyone against this folly. Sai Baba has pointed out that our senses drive us to pleasures, which can turn out to be a source of unceasing pain. This is so because pleasures are often short-lived and once exhausted, they leave behind a sense of loss and injury. Pleasures are said to be 'dukkha-yoni' and 'adyant-vantah', having a beginning and an end.

The one who seeks 'atyantika sukha', bliss, needs to know that it cannot be achieved or even perceived by our senses. It can be reached only by one's buddhi, reason. And having attained bliss, one is never shaken even by sorrows of the greatest magnitude, says the Bhagwad Gita, (verse 6:22) and many anecdotes by Sai Maharaj in Sai Satcharita.

It is necessary to take oneself away from the unreal pleasures of life, states the Gita, verse 5:20. The tool to achieve bliss is undoubtedly jnana, knowledge,

or wisdom that obviates all moha, illusion, which itself is a product of tamo guna. Lord Sainath has pointed out that debilitating emotions come in the way of the pursuit of wisdom, and most of them emanate from rajo guna. Those who are ignorant and faithless invite self-destruction. That is why Baba wants two Paise Dakshina of Shraddha and Saburi – faith and patience.

Therefore, only intellect can lead us to faith and no amount of exercising of the senses or any liturgy can furnish the apparatus to establish faith. Without such faith, there can be no permanent happiness.

Ironically, all karma is to be renounced for freedom from its inevitable fruits. At the level of everyday existence, it is impossible to give up karma, Gita 18:11. Somebody who does not believe in the Self, never attains the state of bliss and is condemned both in this world as well as in the one beyond, Gita 4:40. This leads us to another assertion that one should invariably be centered around the one and the only reality of the Self, and enjoy it to the utmost, be content with that and not aspire for anything else, Gita 3:17. A devotee of Sai Maharaj needs to constantly engage himself in yoga, remaining in a secret place by himself, with thoughts subdued, free from hope and greed, Gita 6:10.

Bliss can be achieved only in the nihilistic space between thoughts, which are a result of one's history, the past. So say modern thinkers like Eckhart Tolle, Sri Narasimha Swamiji, and Sri Radhakrishna Swamiji who made 'Divya Nama Smaran' like Vishnu Sahasra Nama chanting as a stepping stone to bliss. The logic again is anasakti, non-attachment. Attachment can give rise to a sense of non-fulfillment and make you feel frustrated.

The lingering problem is: can we jettison our past for good and forestall the future? We could make a sincere effort to this end. It is ultimately the realization that matters. Realization is essential because looking back invites regrets, and looking beyond the present, the future that is, gives rise to uncertainty and fear.

Miracles Are No Miracles

— by **P.L. Goyal**

Baba draws his devotee to himself by showing him some 'Leela', big or small, which is often termed as a miracle and which becomes the instrument for him to take to Sai bhakti. In reality, the path of bhakti shown by Baba in his lifetime was extremely simple and easy to adopt. But we, his devotees are constantly making it cumbersome by adding age-old practices therein. By doing so, while we are losing track of ourselves, we are also laying out incorrect traditions for others to follow. It is therefore, the primary duty of Sai devotee that he should study 'Shri Sai Satcharitra' deeply and take to the path of Sai bhakti as detailed therein with utmost honesty. I am confident that by doing so, he shall be able to experience a nearness to Baba.

Bhakti or devotion is not a commodity that could be displayed, measured, or weighed. It is an ornament of the soul of an individual. Even assessing devotion in one's bosom correctly many a time goes awry. Length of sustained devotion is also meaningless and many a time proves wrong. The face of a person particularly his eyes, his way of talking, his reaction to events and situations, in fact, his whole bearing, the halo around him, and the vibrations his presence emits, all combine to make an impact on his bhakti. A devotee himself would also not be able to assess his own devotion which is an ever-growing phenomenon, and which never provides satisfaction to the bhakta. Let us remember that devotion can only enter a heart that is guileless, pure, simple, straightforward, and in the person whose whole bearing becomes child-like. For such a devotee, it may no longer be necessary to visit Shirdi and/or Baba's local temples; or count the number of times he says his beads and not even sit



for a fixed number of hours performing puja. The only requirement is that Baba should become a part of his life and the life lived by Baba on earth should become a part of the way of his life and become ingrained within him. All this and even more shall then become his lifestyle and such a devotee will neither know nor even talk or proclaim the depth of his bhakti. Compassion and pity shall become the ornament of his life and he shall share his food and amenities of life with others. The songs emerging from his heart shall reflect his longing for his 'Aaradhya'. Meekness, not arrogance, shall become a part of his nature. His 'Mansa-Vacha-Karma' shall then emit the rays of Shubbra, Shuddha, Satvik Bhakti and he shall then become the 'Ankita' bhakta of Sai of which Hemadpant has talked of in Shri Sai Satcharitra. He shall also spread the fragrance of Sai bhakti all around him. The difference between him and his Sai will gradually diminish. He shall then cease to look for miracles around him. To him every day of life lived shall be a miracle of Baba. Let us ourselves make an assessment of ourselves and see for ourselves, how much progress have we been able to make after having taken to the path of Sai Bhakti. But let us have a firm faith that if we have surrendered heart and soul to our Baba, sooner or later, we are sure to achieve our goal.

According to 'Narad Bhakti Sutra', there are nine kinds of bhakti. My purpose is not to produce a treatise on bhakti. What I write is pure and simple bhakti of a devotee for his Lord - The Great Sai Nath of Shirdi.



A Thought to Ponder

— by **Suresh Chandra Gupta**

Ram, Krishna, Jesus, Mohammad, and Buddha were all 'Purn-Brahm Parmeshwar' (God Incarnate) and descended on earth as the Saviour of mankind according to the needs of the time, place, circumstances, and similar other factors. In that very chain, Shri Sai Samarth appeared in Shirdi, grew up there, showed his leelas, and left the world leaving behind his mark which has acquired eternity and which has become the need of the man of today. Sai established no new religion, no creed, or a new school of thought. From looks, he appeared a Muslim but claimed himself to be a pure 'Brahman' (a high-class Hindu). If we attribute any particular religion to Baba, we shall be straying from the path shown by him. If we create a new creed in his name, we shall be striking at the very roots of his teachings. Every word and every thought uttered by Baba during his life lived on earth, is a living example of it. Baba was the embodiment of the God whose image we have been carrying in our hearts and mind and yet different from it.

Today, there seems to be a conscious effort on the part of Sai devotees, to trap Baba in the limitations of our age-old beliefs. By doing so we shall be doing injustice to him. To stop the worsening of this situation, thinkers and researchers will have to go deep into the life and leelas of Baba and bring out his true philosophy and thinking. Today it is feared that we may change the peculiar recognition that Sai possessed. As we hail from the Hindu community, we seem to have bound Baba in the age-old ceremonial practices, thoughts, and beliefs of our community and made it our firm conviction that Baba's real 'Swaroop' is that which is established in our minds. We are also

not tired of repeating that Baba keeps on changing the Swaroop according to the desires of his bhaktas. For the sake of maintaining the real image of Baba and taking into account the needs of the time, we shall have to raise ourselves above these age-old ways of thinking and change our outlook on Baba. Otherwise, we shall bring down our Baba from the high pedestal he is occupying and merely add his name to the list of already existing Gods, Apostles and Yug Purushas. The devotees of Baba are witness to the fact that even the bones of Baba are ever worried for their welfare, which is a great boon to them.

Today, we have encompassed Baba in the circle of "You shall get what you desire". Did we ever give it a thought that the above-mentioned words of Baba reflect his concern for his devotees? Whatever words Baba uttered were mainly in the form of educative stories and if we take them away from the background in which they were said and project them according to our interpretation, we might be doing injustice to Baba. Today it is absolutely necessary that a team of scholars should go deep into every word and thought attributed to Baba and bring out its correct meaning and interpretation. Else the danger is that we might distort the real image of Baba and defeat the very purpose for achieving which he came into the world.

Experience shows that many words attributed to Baba today have been coined by devotees like you and me, according to our understanding and we are constantly engaged in the drill of coining more such words. The basis of every word attributed to Baba is either the 'Shri Sai Satcharitra' or the books written by a few devotees who lived with Baba in his lifetime which are all available only in the Marathi language, with which the growing number of devotees are not conversant. Every word uttered by Baba in my view, today needs to be given deep thinking, to bring out the real purport and depth of his words. Some authority someday shall have to take the initiative of starting this work which is the need of the day and which would reveal the greatness of this Saint and also maintain his uniqueness.



Children's Corner



Beloved Children,

Om Namō Sainathaya

Sai Baba was taking a walk near Lendi Baug with Nana Chnadorkar. They saw one passerby pick up something.

“What did he pick up?” asked Nana Saheb.

“A piece of truth,” replied Sai Baba.

“Good. No need to be worried,” said Nana Saheb.

“Don’t be confident. Soon they will convert it into a belief and kill the piece of truth,” replied Sai Baba.

Life has become a point of belief rather than a search. One quickly believes this or that but does not search, and hence one becomes a follower. Then one follower quarrels with the other follower and one loses the sense of true exploration.

Hari Vinayak Sathe once started arguing with Kaka Dixit. His argument was, ‘life is about enjoying, and one must enjoy life’. Kaka Saheb told him it is useless

to argue. One can be witty with words but remain unwise inside.

“What is wrong with my statement — life is about enjoying?” Hari Vinayak Sathe insisted. When he met Sai Baba, he told him ‘You have formed a concept that life is about enjoyment. This concept is a conclusion. Based on this conclusion, or thought, your life is being run, is it not? Have you ever questioned your concept and conclusion?’

Sai Baba explained further. Thinking is different from thought. Thought is a conclusion. The concept is your conclusion. Whereas, thinking is a process of discovering ‘what is’. For lots of people, joy is a pleasure. There is nothing wrong with pleasure, but if you think pleasure is equal to joy, you will be disappointed. It is like comfort. Comfort is gratifying, but comfort is not equal to happiness. For, one can be comfortably miserable. House is not equal to home, is it not? In the same way, pleasure is not equal to joy.

Pleasure does not give fulfillment, it gives sensory delight. Joy gives fulfillment. People are in pursuit of this pleasure or that pleasure, and when they don’t get fulfillment, they go on to change the object of pleasure with the hope of fulfillment. Finally, they get disappointed. This makes them unfulfilled, and when the sense organs are not fit for certain pursuits of pleasure, they get further disappointed.

This makes them inwardly

angry. This inner disorder makes them feel low. With this inner state, they work in the office. With the inner disorder, their perceptions or actions in the office become an expression of dissatisfaction and, thus, they create unique problems at the office or at home.



“So, what should I do,” Hari Vinayak Sathe asked.

Be aware of the difference and set your thinking free from conclusions. Look at life freely and then intelligence will tell you pleasure has a place but don’t get limited by pleasure. Then your pursuit is not directed by conclusions but from intelligence. You will realize joy is not something to be reached, but it is a ground of being you should come from. Then you are not a beggar of joy but a giver of joy. In the office or at home, you will learn the skill to give joy and not beg for joy. Your experience of the world becomes hugely different and hence, set your mind free from thought, conclusions, and concepts but learn to think wisely. Thinking is different from thought.

Yours Sai Babaly

The Sai Aura Team



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